**Faculty of Creative Industries Post Graduate Symposium**

**June 6th 2022**

**Outline of the Day**

**10.15 – 10.30: Introduction to the day** Prof. Paul Carr

**Panel 1: 10.30 – 12.30**

Chair: Prof. Emily Underwood Lee

# **What’s the problem with amateur theatre? Findings from a literature review**

Lucy Henderson: 10028005@students.southwales.ac.uk

This presentation draws on ongoing PhD research on amateur theatre, access and engagement. Amateur theatre is a popular activity in the UK which has been plagued by problematic notions. Other amateur activity, however, is frequently celebrated on national television through competitions showcasing amateur baking, sewing, potting, painting, etc. Online amateur activity is also increasingly popular, as demonstrated by viral TikTok and Instagram videos depicting amateur performers singing or acting out short scenes. The popularity of online amateur performers is best validated by 2021’s *Ratatouille: The TikTok Musical,* devised entirely by amateur performers on TikTok*.* This presentation will explore what problematic notions are applied to amateur theatre, and why these notions appear to be unique to amateur theatre. The presentation will draw from research into the historical context of amateur theatre, particularly the impact of funding agendas, performance spaces used by amateur groups and what they may imply, and the implications of a group being labelled as ‘amateur’. The disconnect between these problematic notions and the opinions of those who perform, watch, and research amateur theatre are raised along with the impact of problematic notions on engagement with amateur theatre. Reasons for exploring this topic, for example, aiding the development of applied theatre provisions, are put forward and ideas for further inquiry are suggested.

**Exploring the Impact of Digital Storytelling for Health**

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My research is examining the impact of Digital Storytelling (DS) for health; this presentation will introduce DS, and provide a short summary of my findings to date. In partnership with Swansea Bay University Health Board and USW through KESS2, I am examining benefits which may be derived through this arts practice for patients, staff, and employees, and considering how we may measure improvements.

Digital storytelling is an emerging method of collecting contextual data, with narrative medicine and the emergence of health humanities bolstering the role and importance of this method (Lang et al., 2019). Currently within health care, we rely heavily upon statistics and metrics to report whether we are performing well, for example valuing measures of waiting times, length of hospital admission or engagement with a service (Welsh Government, 2019). Metrics, often derived from questionnaires, can fail to capture the full picture of patient experience, or supply information about context and quality of care, elements often overlooked or disregarded within a medical model (Goodrich and Fitzsimons, 2018; Wu, 2013; Robertson and Clegg, 2017). Context is key to providing person-centred care, a critical element in any form of recovery (Santana et al., 2017).

Valuing the experience of patients can help us learn more about the impact staff and organisations have on health care, providing opportunities for learning and challenging the way care is provided to improve efficacy.

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**The efficacy of therapeutic storytelling in breaking down barriers:   
A qualitative study into the experiences of parent carers of children with learning disabilities attending mainstream education**

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*Community/academic partnerships (Industry-university collaboration)*

Reflections on benefits of collaboration, where joining a community of practice for learning disabilities opened doors for sharing professional good practice and getting my research ‘out there’. This community consists of educators, members of the Welsh Assembly and health and social care professionals from University Health Board Trusts in Wales, along with parent carers of those with learning disabilities. Involvement in this has produced interest in my research from prospective participants along with professionals interested in working with me, leading me to consider setting up a steering group for my research.

*Appraisal of methodological approaches adopted to conduct my research*

Methodological pluralism takes the view that no research methodology is cast aside as there can be many potential ways to examine a phenomenon or topic. The impact of taking a pluralistic perspective in the study was the view that using interpretative phenomenological analysis as a methodology aims not only to inform the researcher but also to offer a time for reflection and change of experience and knowledge for its participants, therefore offering both myself and parent carers an opportunity to gain insight and understanding of each other. IPA regards the researcher as tool in the research, used to unlock participants inner world and facilitate the telling of their story. Being open to different methodologies also gives me an opportunity to incorporate a creative element to the research, integrating IPA with creative methods to enrich the narrative, where participants art becomes data.

Seeing all methodologies as valid but also being open to adaptation and integration, a systematic approach to my literature review intertwines with a narrative approach to consider historical perspectives with reflexivity. A meta-narrative approach to systematic review as a process of starting with a narrow lens, identifying contemporary research from USW theses and research output (to check that my research was innovative) widening the lens to output from all Welsh universities by searching the National Library of Wales, widening further to include UK studies by undertaking a SCOPUS search, and finally expanding to consider global research. A systematic process of widening the lens geographically and historically, allowing the literature to tell the story.

*Considerations surrounding the impacts/potential impacts of the research on society*

The potential impact of the research in breaking down barriers for a marginalised group in society and laying the groundwork for inclusion of those with learning disabilities to be involved in future studies to identify specific psychological therapies.

**The Eco Logical Theatre Fest: exploring the potential of temporary event spaces in activating social-ecological connection**

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This presentation examines how the creation of community-engaged event spaces can activate social-ecological potential, fostering new sustainable approaches to culture and territory. The Eco Logical Theatre Fest is an annual event hosting nine days of performances and panel discussions on the remote island of Stromboli, Sicily. In addition to proposing a net zero model, the Fest promotes a participatory approach to set design, involving both artists and members from the local community in the co-creation of temporary event spaces through the regeneration of private properties, historic buildings and disused land. By combining community engagement, stage design and regenerative placemaking, the Fest aims to bring a community-oriented and regenerative focus to spatial design, highlighting the role that the creation of gathering spaces can play in fostering dialogue and in building social-ecological capital. Another important aspect to the discussion is the capacity of the process of taking over and activating space for bringing diverse groups together, bridging intergenerational gaps and involving people from different age groups in discovering how they can make a fundamental contribution to place, especially in light of the environmental crisis that we are situated in. Using examples from practice, the presentation will explore the opportunities and challenges of creating temporary event spaces for and with the contribution of the community, as well as the changing role of theatre in seeking out possibilities for social, cultural and ecological revitalisation and in fostering new opportunities for building social connectedness and community resilience.

**Francesca Forlini** is a theatre practitioner and a PhD candidate in English Literature at Roma Tre University. In her dissertation, tentatively entitled “Towards and Ecological Theatre: The use of space in contemporary Welsh site-specific theatre”, she investigates the historical development of a Welsh site-specific performance tradition, showing its overlap with an emergent ecological consciousness. She holds a BA in English and French Literature (2017) and an MA in English and Anglo-American Literature from Sapienza University of Rome (2019) and is currently conducting research at the University of South Wales in Cardiff under the supervision of Dr. Márta Minier. Her main research interests are in contemporary British theatre and in the intersections of drama, theatre and performance with geography, history, politics and climate research. Since 2018, she has been associate artistic director of the Eco Logical Theater Fest in Stromboli, Italy.

**The Story of Exile: A Perilous Journey to a New Land**

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There is a strange situation in Iran; it has a large number of young, educated, and talented individuals whose only wish is to possess the basic rights like freedom of speech and equal job opportunities. However, as they see no optimistic prospects in their home country, every year a large number of them decide to migrate to other countries, mainly western countries, to secure a good future for themselves. A great number of those who leave Iran annually are women, who either embark on this process with their family members, or independently and on their own. During the years, women have chosen several ways to secure a safe and legal passage to the west; some of them have decided to apply and study in western institutions, find a job opportunity, or marry someone who has a residence permission. A number of them, however, have sought perilous journeys and applied for asylum in western countries. The subjects of my PhD research are Iranian-born, UK resident women who share their stories of exile with me. I am going to share my subjects’ stories with the UK audience, and the aim will be to depict all the hardships they have been through both when they were in Iran and the UK. The stories come in the form of recordings, narrated by me, and will be accompanied by a number of my self-portraits in which I will hold objects given to me or chosen by my subjects. The objects are referred to by my subjects in their stories, and they have special importance for them. I, therefore, try to convey their symbolic significance in my self-portraits. My self-portraits and my recordings enable me to speak on behalf of my subjects and narrate the story of exile which is full of pain. In this symposium, I am going to share with you the story of one of my subjects who is living in the UK on refugee status, along with my self-portraits that add symbolic significance to her story of exile.

**Scriptwriting and character design in a close animation adaptation of The Hound of the Baskervilles**

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This proposed paper will consider the issues to do with adapting for the medium of animation with reference to producing a close animation adaptation ofArthur Conan Doyle’s classic, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. The talk will explore similarities between animation and other adaptations due to the decision-making involved in how a source text is adapted into a different medium. My current focus is on character development and how the design of these is affected by individual interpretation of the original source, the changes in societal attitudes that influence how we perceive the era in which a source is set, as well as the influence from other contemporary adaptations.

The paper considers the issues arising from the adaptation process when the intention is to closely represent the original story by Conan-Doyle alongside Sidney Paget’s illustrations. To address what is represented, it starts by asking what is ‘Holmes’. Sherlock Holmes is now seen as an icon in past and modern culture. This discussion draws on McCaw’s (2011) suggestion that Holmes is a “palimpsest” type of character that has become a cultural text. It has been repeatedly changed or modified over time but keeps the fundamental aspects that make up that character. This highlights how the traces of the original texts continues to influence subsequent adaptations based on the original stories through ‘palimpsestuous intertextuality’ (Hutcheon, 2013 p.21).

The two approaches I have chosen for this enquiry are dialogue and character design in relation to the creative development of the close adaptation. I explore how this has shaped my script in respect of the dialogue when trying to retain the original text. I will highlight various influences on my own adaptation, having watched many other adaptations. My critique of their content, in respect of the extent to which they follow Conan-Doyle’s original story, has informed my choices. This has also shed light on a conflict in trying to understand the author’s intentions and maintain ‘fidelity’, whilst creating my own version that is closely informed by my interpretation.

Developing the character design for Holmes has illuminated the use of the descriptive content of Conan-Doyle’s text for me and how Paget’s illustrations have informed adaptations. This points to Holmes as an evolving character through adaptation and therefore the possible lack of recognition of the source text itself by an audience.

***Lunch: 12.30-1.15***

**Panel 2: 1.15 – 3.15**

Chair: Dr. Simon Thomas

**Emerging complexity informed leadership roles: A theoretical synthesis and integrative framework**

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This research intends to disclose how leadership looks like in organizations that do not rely on traditional hierarchical set-ups but are structured in a rather self-organized way. Mostly, real corporate organizational structures represent an unrealistic image of a complex organizational living system. Hence, this doctoral thesis aims on analysing under which conditions complexity informed leadership emergences and what kind of activities are regarded as leadership roles in real-live organizations, that successfully incorporate complexity principles within their organizational structure.

**The findings** indicate that in this type of organizations, leadership is without power to control or directly influence organizational outcomes. Taking decisions and being responsible for subordinated organizational members are not anymore associated as central leadership roles. A pivotal function of the investigated complexity informed leadership is to create an environment where people are mentally and methodically empowered and hence feel save to take risks. Evidences suggest that this is most likely achieved by promoting a corresponding mindset through the entire organization. Based on certain structural patterns and conditions that impact members´ collaboration, (leadership) responsibility is distributed across any organizational member and as consequence, complexity informed leadership including its inherent roles are emerging. Finally, these findings were integrated into a framework with value applicable for theory and practice.

**The methodological choice** was to study real corporate organizations that do not try to control complexity but instead incorporate complexity and its derived principles within their organization. This was done by means of a qualitative exploratory and interpretative approach. Semi-structured interviews were regarded to most appropriately facilitate exploring such organizational patterns and how leadership emerges as real-life phenomena in these organizations. In this way, the identified gaps from the literature were discussed with leadership, organisational development and self-organization experts who could draw on extensive practical experience during the 19 undertaken interviews in medium and large complexity informed organizations.

**Discovering Newport's post-war Development Plan and the achievements of its Borough Architect, Johnson Blackett**

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Studying for a Masters by Research on The Importance of Post–War Housing in my hometown of Newport has led me to discover material that, I believe, will be of value to its citizens, allowing engagement and reevaluation of current thought on Newport’s post-war social housing policy.

Newport’s Development Plan, presented in 1953 as a 20-year plan for the future, is an examination of a post–war town with ambitions to regenerate by attracting commerce and skills with the promise of an advantageous lifestyle and social housing, thus positioning itself in the vanguard of modernist urban planning. Central to the Plan was the Borough Architect, Johnson Blackett, devotee of Aneurin Bevan’s socialist utopia, whose design for Newport’s Gaer Estate won a coveted Award of Merit at the 1951 Festival of Britain. Blackett’s ideas for a series of Neighbourhood Units in Newport became the Plan’s focus over 20 years, received worldwide recognition. No record of the Development Plan appeared to exist until my research pointed to a copy being sent to the National Library of Wales in 1953, leading to discovery of the original Development Plan at Newport Library, including several hand–painted maps of Newport, sketches and diagrams of the Council’s vision.

Further investigation has since uncovered Blackett’s personal archive at the University of South Australia, donated upon his death in 1982. Archivist Dr Julie Collins has sent a photographic copy of this Newport related collection, including personal photographs of the Neighbourhood Units, design and site plans, certificates of achievement, medals, speeches, and newspaper clippings.

An exhibition in collaboration with Newport Museum and Library is planned at the Newport Campus, showcasing the Development Plan and supported by Blackett’s archive, along with a series of walks, thus providing Newport’s citizens opportunity to share memories I plan to record, invoking the theory of ‘the derive’, inspired by the Situationist concept originally put forward by Guy Debord.

Examination of these documents has enabled me to argue that Newport’s post-war Council reinforced the Development Plan through successive Councils and political change, committing to the concept that quality housing was key to encouraging enterprise to the town, thus aiding the regeneration of Newport in the aftermath of war, and allowing the exchange of failing pre-war industries on which the town had previously relied, with preferred ‘white collar’ business.

**Kristina of Sweden: Myth making in the early modern memoir**

Connor Webb: connor.webb@southwales.ac.uk

Born in 1626 and ascending to the throne as a minor in 1632, Queen Kristina of Sweden held her throne in her own right for only ten years before she chose to abdicate her throne, and subsequently move to Rome and converted to Roman Catholicism. In 1681, at the age of 55, Kristina began writing her memoirs. Though the document remains unfinished it is a piece of writing that is equal parts revealing and unusual and is often used as one of the main sources of information about her early life.

In this presentation I will examine how memoirs and other types of self-writing, specifically this memoir written by Queen Kristina, are forms of constructed writing and why this is important to consider when analysing these kinds of sources. While the broad historical facts are likely to have been recorded in many sources and are thus easily verifiable, more personal anecdotes are much less likely to have been repeated elsewhere. As a result, it can be very difficult to substantiate the contents in these instances, therefore these memoirs cannot necessarily be considered completely factual representations of the author’s life. Instead these memoirs can be essentially considered to be a form of myth making for the author, as they use their writing to construct a highly curated image of themselves. The stories, anecdotes and themes chosen show how the individual perceived themselves as well as how they hoped to be seen by others. These themes consequently form some of the most important factors to consider when looking at an individual’s self-representations.

**Decolonising the University: A Study of Histories and History Departments**

**in Welsh Higher Education Institutions**

Jessica Davies: Jessica.davies1@southwales.ac.uk

The focus of the presentation is to provide an overview of the research which will explore the structure, methodology and key arguments of the thesis. As the research is focused upon decolonisation of Welsh HEI, it seems only fit to discuss how one defines the term and the justification for, and the complexities of, undertaking such a project. Although there has been works on decolonisation from various disciplines, namely Sociology, the relationship between the historical discipline, colonialism and Wales remains unexplored and thus, it is hoped this research would contribute to filling this void. The thesis looks at decolonisation through the lenses of ethnicity and nation, meaning exploring the experience of Black and Minority Ethnic academics, Welsh-language scholars, and the Welsh language in the academe. Adding to this, the research examines the inclusion of Black and Minority Ethnic groups and the history of Wales within the curriculum.

The presentation will explain methodological approaches used, namely a mixed-method approach and interviews as the main primary source data. It is important to note that the thesis is driven by the thoughts and feelings of interview participants to emphasise the most crucial aspects of ‘decolonising’ Welsh HE. The presentation will explore the challenges that occurred during the process and its progress to date. From this, the key findings of the research to date will be presented which includes physical and intellectual legacies of colonialism on university campuses across Wales and examine the ways in which universities acknowledge or are attempting to dismantle such legacies. Lastly, the presentation will highlight the potential impact on society (or on the university, as is the focus of the research). It is hoped that by presenting on these issues, it would inspire others to consider implementing decolonial initiatives within their own research and teaching. The overriding aim of the research is to generate awareness of colonial legacies within Welsh HEI - as these can be both physical and intellectual - and motivate institutions to listen to its staff and students regarding the implementation of initiatives.

**Legacies of Anglo-American Nuclear Testing: Operation Dominic and the International Nuclear Test Veteran**

Joshua Bushen: [joshua.bushen@southwales.ac.uk](mailto:joshua.bushen@southwales.ac.uk)

The intention of this presentation is to explain the framework through which I will be analysing Operation Dominic, a joint nuclear testing operation executed by the UK and the USA in 1962. The presentation will highlight some of the key issues I encountered while attempting to develop a framework that would allow me to analyse the social, political, and military implications of the first and only large scale atmospheric nuclear weapons test series executed co-operatively by the UK and the USA. In spite of Operation Dominic’s remarkably unique circumstances, there is a lack of detailed academic material that focuses the bulk of its attention on the events, significance, and outcomes of Operation Dominic. I intend to fill part of this void with my thesis, the first part of which will look at Operation Dominic’s significance in Anglo-American nuclear history where the majority of the information used to ascertain Operation Dominic’s significance comes from archival research conducted at the National Archives. Furthermore, the second part of the thesis will highlight the experiences of UK Operation Dominic veterans, showing how their experiences of veteranhood are markedly different from that of independent UK nuclear test veterans. These experiences are extracted from interviews and form the basis for much of the second part of this thesis.

In the thesis I perceive veterans of Operation Dominic not as British veterans but as international veterans whose service is implicated in both US and UK nuclear history. Through this perception I am able to more easily tie together the military history of the first part of the thesis with the social history that will make up much of the latter section. The first part of the thesis shows how this unique international identity is created at Operation Dominic through the most clear practical expression of the newly formed Anglo-American nuclear alliance. The second part of the thesis will analyse the implications of this international identity, touching on issues surrounding monetary compensation and medallic recognition. In this presentation I intend to analyse how this framework came to be, its limitations, and its strengths.

**Assessing The Impact Of Liquidity And Capital Regulatory Reforms On Banks In The Uk**

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There have been several regulatory reforms introduced over the years in response to the financial crisis that have occurred throughout the history of modern banking and finance. An underlying motive that can be found in all the reforms over the years is enhancing the resilience of the financial services industry to various forms of adverse shocks. This proposed study attempts to assess the impact of liquidity and capital regulatory reforms on retail banks in the UK over the period 1990 to 2020. This will be done by addressing the following research objectives. The study will assess how cost efficiency of the retail banks is affected by liquidity and capital targeting regulatory reforms. The second is to examine the effect regulatory reforms have on the market value of retail banks as measured by their share price returns over the period considered by the study. The final objective will be to assess how the profitability of retail banks has been affected by the cost they incurred in complying with regulation.

This study employs a triangulation and mixed method approach to find answers to the stated research questions. This study proposes to focus on the impact of liquidity and capital regulatory reforms on banks in the UK by focusing on the top 4 retail banks in UK. The basis for the selection of these banks will be based on a pre-determined minimum market capitalisation. The study will employ secondary qualitative and quantitative data that are publicly available. The data required for this study will be accessed via electronic channels, such as electronic databases, online peer reviewed journals, corporate websites, and online libraries.

Keywords: Regulatory Reforms, Banking, Financial Crisis, Retail Banks.

***Break: 3.15 – 3.35***

**3.35: Keynote: Dr Louise Bright. The Researcher Development Concordat**

The Concordat sets out the conditions that are required to create the very best culture for researchers to thrive. It identifies working practices and clears responsibilities, vital to increase the appeal and sustainability of researcher careers in the UK.  
  
Discussing the three defining principles of the Concordat (Environment and Culture, Employment, and Professional and Career Development), this session will explore how USW, as a signatory of the concordat, is working to improve the experience of researchers at USW and to support their career development.

Chair: Prof. Paul Carr

**4.30: Closing comments and close. Professor Martin Steggall. Pro Vice Chancellor Research**